

## Holy Water

For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God (Hebrews 9:13-14)?

Holy water was sprinkled upon an Israelite, removing the uncleanness and the last taint of disease. An unblemished red heifer had been slain; its ashes then mixed with water, cedar, hyssop, and scarlet, symbols of the Israelite's salvation and cleansing. The water was sprinkled upon him, not for any *specific* thing he had done, but to remove the uncleanness resulting from a sinful nature.

The heifer represents Christ who was slain to remove our sin. The heifer was burned outside the camp, in the same manner as Christ was killed outside the city of Jerusalem. Anyone who touched the heifer's ashes between the time when the heifer was burned and its ashes were mixed into the water became unclean. The heifer was considered to symbolically bear the uncleanness of the people; even as Christ bore our sins and became unclean from the time He was sacrificed upon the cross until after the resurrection.

Not until the ashes were mixed with the water, cedar, hyssop, and scarlet, would the ashes remove the curse. Not until Christ had defeated the last vestiges of sin which had come upon Him from us, could the Spirit of Christ, sprinkled out from Him, redeem us from our sin.

Christ was separated from the love of the Father as we had been, so that He could become the "first-born among many brethren (Romans 8:29)." He was the first person born-again, so that He could pour that born-again nature into us through the Holy Spirit. Christ had to be victorious as a man, be baptized as a man, and learn submission to God as a man so that He could impart that perfected human nature into us. Hebrews 5:8-9 says that "although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation."

Before Christ, sacrifices could remove the results of sin, but never sin itself; they could

only symbolize its full removal. Hebrews 10:4 says, “For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.” But Christ took our sins upon Himself, paid the penalty for that sin by dying on the cross, and overcame the power of our sin. He was then able to pour His victorious nature into us, removing sin entirely from our lives.

“Forgiveness” prior to Christ meant merely “a covering over” (Hebrew: kaphar) of sin and the removal of its results: sickness, disease, poverty, oppression, etc . . . Forgiveness in the New Testament is a sending away (Greek: *aphiemi*) of sin itself, because the nature of Christ is imparted into our lives with all its accompanying power to destroy sin. This is why Hebrews 10:14,17 says, “For by one offering He has *perfected* for all time those who are sanctified . . . Now where there is forgiveness [sending away] of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin.” No further sacrifice is needed when we have received the full effect of this sacrifice; we are perfected and no longer need any further offerings. Our sin nature is not just covered over, in which case further sacrifice would be required every time we acted out of our sin nature. Rather, our sin nature is abolished and destroyed.

The sacrifice is complete. We need to be sprinkled; or actually, to stand beneath the waterfall!